

On Top Of The News



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Monday, November 16, 2009

Sinterklaas arrives on Aruba!



ORANJESTAD HARBOR
- Sinterklaas, Aruba's most popular celebrity, received a royal welcome as he and his Swarte Piet arrived in Oranjestad Harbor yesterday afternoon. Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar, the Minister of Economic and Social Affairs and culture and her children Dylan and Morgan were among the thousands of children and



their parents who came to greet Sinterklaas to Aruba. Party Animals provided music and entertainment to occupy the children until his arrival, accompanied by dozens of fans in pleasure boats.

All along the barricades youngsters and the young-at-heart crowded to sing songs to Sinterklaas and received a hug or a treat. He informed the crowd it was a very long trip from his home in

Spain, and they made a brief stopover in Curacao before



making their way to Aruba. For the next few weeks he will be seen all around the island with his Swarte Piet, visiting children and distributing gifts to all those that have been good little boys and girls the

Continued on Page 3



The Radisson supports Aruba's destination marketing drive



PALM BEACH – A Site Inspection was recently hosted by the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa. Sales Manager Vicky Perez toured a group of 12 decision-makers from Venezuela, invited to visit the island by Omega Travel.

The tireless Aruba Convention Bureau

representative Jerusha Rasmijn and the most supportive Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association representative Darice Solognier joined the group at the end of the tour for leisurely dinner at the resort's AAA 4-star rated restaurant, the Sunset Grille.

Aruba's destination marketing targets South American visitors and as part of that effort groups of meeting & event planners are regularly invited to the island for an action packed first hand experience of all that Aruba has to offer.










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Sinterklaas arrives on Aruba!



Continued from Front Page

Earlier in October, bad news had come that Sinterklaas was having some problems affording the trip to Aruba, as he had also been hit hard by the global financial situation, but the management of Caribbean Mercantile Bank immediately came forward upon hearing of his monetary distress, determined that the children of Aruba would not be disappointed this year. As he strolled of the docking area to the horse drawn carriage that would take him down L.G. Smith Boulevard, Sinterklaas attempted to personally greet every child that had come to welcome him to Aruba.

Sinterklaas will remain until his birthday on December 5. Until then, he visits most homes to leave small surprises and sweet treats for youngsters who leave their shoe out, and a bit of water and grass for his horse. After the big celebrations on his birthday, he and his Swarte Piet will quietly return to Spain until next year. □

Special Month of November!

Appetizer

- Fish Soup
- Onion Soup
- Conch Fritters
- Escargot
- Salad

Entrée

- **Fresh Catch of the Day** prepared by our local chef just the way you like it.
- **Jumbo Shrimp** from our local waters, breaded served with potato or rice or with garlic tossed over linguine.
- **Filet Mignon** 8 oz. US Tenderloin
- **Grilled Boneless Chicken Breast**

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Sponsored by PriceWaterhouseCoopers

Jr. Tennis Cup 2009 Competition Registration Deadline is Nov 17th



ORANJESTAD—A recent press conference at the Oranjestad headquarters of PriceWaterhouseCoopers announced the 7th annual PriceWaterhouseCoopers Junior Tennis Tournament, organized by Jorge Sanchez, of Sanchez Tennis Services, and generously sponsored by the firm's Aruba branch. It is expected to become the biggest event in junior tennis on the island.

The tournament, says Sanchez, has been consistently exciting over the years delivering excellent matches and developing the sport and sportsmanship among local kids. This year, the event is endorsed by the Tennis Federation, making it the last official ranking tournament in 2009.

Sanchez extended an open invitation for parents, to sign up their kids for an excellent tournament at the Aruba Racquet Club. Because pre-registration is required, parents are encouraged to do so prior to deadline, which is Nov 17th. More tournament information, said Sanchez, can be obtained at Aruba Racquet Club or by writing to: sancheztennis@setarnet.aw



Member

The Tumescent Liposculpture presentation will be repeated in Aruba

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Tickets are available for Afl. 25,00 at the office at **Cumana 92**.

Program

Dr. Harold Narain, Gynaecologist will be hosting the presentation.

Place: Aruba Surf Side Marina

Date: Monday 23rd November, 2009

Time: 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

- **Siomara Everon** will also be there to share her Experience with you.
- **Diana Velasquez** of Body Magic, will give you information on post-operative Lipo-Massage
- **Niurca de Cuba** will give you a short Zumba demostration.
- **Enith Sivo** will talk to you about Nutricion.

Please pass by our office for your tickets at Cumana 92.

For more information feel free to call: **583-5993**

See you there!

General Information: The PriceWaterhouseCoopers Jr. Tennis Cup 2009, will be played from Nov 19th to Nov 21st, 2009. Deadline for registration is Nov 17th.

The tournament categories are as follows: 8, 10, 12, 14, 18 & U, for both Boys & Girls, in a Singles format.

The tournament is expected to attract more than 100 players hailing from all local tennis clubs. The daily tournament schedule will feature matches from 2:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., weekdays, and Saturday, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The PriceWaterhouseCoopers 7th annual Jr. Tennis Cup 2009 will host the closing ceremony on Saturday 21st, 2009, followed by an award ceremony, immediately after the finals.

Trophies will be presented by a PriceWaterhouseCoopers, company representatives.

The award ceremony will be followed by a special party where all players will have an opportunity to network and exchange experiences, win prizes, to live DJ music and drinks. All participants will be presented with a commemorative Tournament T-shirt.

The tournament venue, the Aruba Racquet Club, posts most information on line at: www.arc.aw; information may also be solicited at Tel.: +297-593 6263.

Pictured here Edsel Lopez, of PriceWaterhouseCoopers and Jorge Sanchez, of Sanchez Tennis Services at the press conference. □

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Better than nothing

The suggestion by the Democratic Deficit Committee to allow voters in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba to vote in Dutch Parliament elections is an intriguing one. The proposal also implies passive voting rights, but it is doubtful at best that a party or individual in, for example, St. Maarten would be elected in the "national poll" because of the difference of population size compared to the Netherlands. For that same reason of the scale involved, the influence of voters in the Dutch Caribbean on the composition and policies of the Second (and possibly also the First) Chamber anyway would be limited at best. As a result of that – and based on the age-old principle that "all politics are local" – the interest for such a vote on the islands probably would be minimal, as was already the case with recent elections for the European Parliament, in which the citizens of Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles could participate for the first time.

Still, the proposal creates the possibility for more

cooperation between parties and politicians within the Kingdom, some of which could already be seen in the European election, as two candidates from Aruba who live in the Netherlands took part on the lists of Dutch parties, but also campaigned on the islands and in one case was almost elected into office. The relationship between the AVP of Aruba and the CDA of the Netherlands is an example of the kind of cooperation ties that could be strengthened to where the political establishment of the various islands very well might gain substantial influence in The Hague in the long run.

The committee involved was in any case correct in its conclusion that establishing a real Kingdom Parliament with delegates from the legislatures of the Netherlands, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles conceivably travelling back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean would be too cumbersome and costly. That is all the more the case because the Antillean Parliament will be replaced soon by two new Parliaments,

those of Country Curaçao and Country St. Maarten. Because the Kingdom Council of Ministers will continue to consist of the Dutch Cabinet complemented only by the Plenipotentiary Minister of each of the other Kingdom countries, obtaining the right to vote for the Parliament that actually controls the Dutch Government would at least give the islands a little more "grip" on the Kingdom level. The argument that Antilleans and Arubans in the Netherlands would also want voting rights

for the parliaments on the islands does not really hold water:

Reciprocity in this case would mean giving that right to all Dutchmen living in the Netherlands, not just those who came from the Dutch Caribbean, and that's obviously out of the question. The matter of Antilleans and Arubans in the Netherlands voting on the islands is a separate discussion in which many issues still would need to be resolved, such as whether to determine such a

right only by birth or also by heritage.

While the Dutch political parties don't seem too keen on the idea of people on the islands voting for the Second Chamber, they have little to worry about considering the numbers involved.

With a real Kingdom Parliament not a realistic option, it would be at least one – be it small – step to address a democratic deficit at the Kingdom level that is very real; and something is still better than nothing. □



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*** Human Hints ***

Your Emotions Will Guide You

The Human Population has been held in constant distraction.

This is one reason we remain frozen, while the dire necessity for action screams to us all. We have reached a pinnacle moment in Human history, when our Internal Clarity is critical and the very structure of society keeps us from ourselves.

The physical world distracts us through our emotions. When we are emotionally attached to something, it uses our time

and energy. If we let them, our emotions can drain our energy, starving the parts of ourselves that need our attention.

While emotion can be an irresistible temptation, it is also your guide into your unconscious.

This is where fine balance is necessary. Emotion will guide you along your true path in life, but can also distract you without you even knowing. The trick is to embrace your emotion while maintaining control over it. This way, you

grow from your emotion while not getting lost in it. How do you maintain control over something you're completely immersed in?

Remember that it is an illusion.

The Human Consciousness is turning away from empty distraction, and finding fulfillment in family and service to the community. Now is the time for each of us to discover our unique form of contribution.

We will find personal fulfillment by acting to save the world.

If you spend your days working for a cause you believe in, your efforts will be energized and passionate. What tragedy in the world grabs your attention and breaks your heart?

What unique talents and abilities do you have, that will help balance or reduce the

tragedy that grips you? Your time, energy and passion are not free, so if you need money, figure out a way to get paid for your efforts. You give unique value to the Universe, and you decide how

your energy is returned to you. Keep your intentions clear and Spirit will take care of the three dimensional details.

Our emotions will give us the strength and courage to act against injustice. Now that we know there is no fulfillment in the empty three dimensional illusion, we are forced to find completion within ourselves. We complete ourselves by using our passion to create justice in the world.

The Human Mass Consciousness is being forced into transformation. We have seen the emptiness behind the pursuit of physical

things, and we have begun to place value in connecting to the community through contribution, and bonding with those we Love.

Genuine and Trustworthy are necessary credentials in the new marketplace. Unscrupulous behavior will not be tolerated. Such acts will be simply unacceptable to the Whole, and will be snuffed out like an ember in an ocean.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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The French Steakhouse delivers dining under the stars



Eagle Beach – The French Steakhouse at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa just added another charming dining option, a tropical outdoor courtyard, featuring delicious cuisine under the

stars.

The famed French Steakhouse prides itself on the elegant dining experience it offers patrons in the fully air-conditioned dining room. Yet recently the idea of adding a garden spot to the existing blueprint began to sprout in the creative mind of Executive Chef George Hoek, and he immediately recruited the landscapers to create the intimate, lovely setting. The French Steakhouse Ooh-La-La menu is now served indoor and alfresco, featuring creative appetizers, soups, salads, seafood dishes, poultry and the Pièce de Résistance South American & USDA Beef specialties.

Among popular appetizers the chef's Tropical Crab Cakes with pineapple & mango salsa and the Teriyaki Glazed Seared Duck Breast, served with garden greens and balsamic dressing, are real crowd pleasers.

True to the restaurant's French roots, the Onion Soup is a classic, while the Honey Glazed Salmon Salad winks at the exotic East with a sweet soy dressing. The menu features a great variety of seafood dishes from fresh fish to the totally sinful and amazingly decadent Caribbean Stuffed Shrimp with Crabmeat and Bacon, which became an instant hit. The tequila and sweet chili glaze, lends the Jumbo shrimp a pure taste of heaven!

The French Steakhouse is naturally famous for the South American Churrasco steak, a signature preparation, which now shares the stage with juicy



USDA beef specialties such as NY Sirloin and Filet Mignon.

Light-eaters will find the Jerk Chicken Skewers and the Lemon Herb Broilers very satisfying.

Open seven days a week from 5:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. the French Steakhouse is blessed with the nicest staff and a delightfully renovated dining room with sparkling China, crisp linen, an interesting bread basket, colossal desserts and live jazz on piano with Eddy Samson who is Aruba's best entertainer, and a walking & breathing music encyclopedia, just whistle the tune, and Eddy will produce a symphonic version of your favorite song.

Hungry patrons will appreciate the Ambassador's 5-course menu featuring the run of the menu highlights for just \$34.95 per person. www.manchebo.com/steakhouse □

Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar reinvents Beach Cuisine



Eagle Beach – Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa is widely recognized as the home of Beach Cuisine.

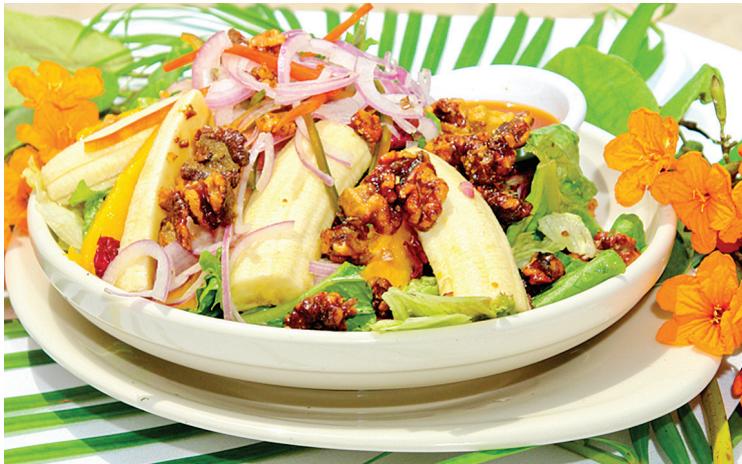
Executive Chef George Hoek and his culinary team serve a Sun Splashed menu on the ocean front terrace, raising the restaurant to a must-visit, must-try status.

The contemporary menu, lists many favorite dishes from around the world, borrowing inspiration from US, Mexican, Thai, Jamaican, Cuban, Greek and Mediterranean kitchens, all served with a tropical, Caribbean flair.

From Sun-Sational Salads, to Cuban pressed jawbreakers and wraps, mid-day platters also include oversize Beef Burgers, Philly Cheese Steak Sandwiches and Hot Dogs.

The Pega Pega tropical &

frozen cocktail list, with fresh fruit or ice cream smoothies, daiquiris, coladas and margaritas, leaves nothing out, including Yellow Birds, Sex on the Beach and Mudslides,



making a lunch-time brain-freeze, extremely easy to get! The Pega Pega, one of Aruba's oldest beach bars is open on fabulous Eagle Beach, with

unrivaled views, caring, gracious service, and relaxed atmosphere, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. The bar is open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. □

Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano introduces Menu Turistico



Eagle Beach -- Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano located at the heart of the low-rise hotels at the Manchebo Beach Resort &

Spa, delivers authentic Mediterranean flavors, at a reasonable price.

The restaurant has just introduced Menu Turistico a three-course dinner featuring appetizers, main courses and desserts for just \$19.95, per person, plus 15% service charge.

Patrons may choose between home made soup and Caesar salad, Fettuccini Alfredo, Lasagna Casareccia, Spaghetti alla Bolognese or any favorite pizza with Tiramisu, Cheese Cake or Ice Cream for the sweet finale.

Executive Chef George Hoek is the resort's much-appreciated culinary expert. He was the recent recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association in collaboration with the Digicel Group. Chef George accepted the Shoco Award, the national award of excellence, and Aruba's top professional decoration, in the tourism industry. □

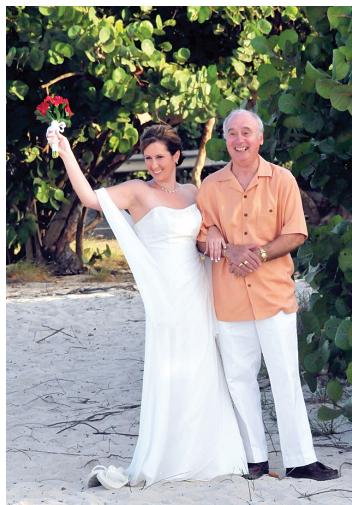
Celebrating with toes in the sand ceremony

Jennifer & Joe celebrate love with marriage



EAGLE BEACH – Jennifer Thomson and Joe Rivera were married on November

6, 2009 at Aruba's historical Civil House in downtown Oranjestad and then continued



their celebration with a beach blessing on Eagle Beach before family and friends.

Jennifer & Joe planned their wedding with Edwina Werleman of E2 Events and Celebrations, who created the most magical and memorable day ever.

After their private toes in the sand ceremony with Rev. Robert Gibson, the couple and their wedding guests were transported to the Aruba

Marriott Resort for a cocktail reception and white-glove plated dinner.

Jennifer and Joe ended their special day with an official cake cutting and sharing ceremony for all family and friends to witness, then they continued the celebration with lots of toasting and dancing. Congratulations from Aruba Today and Bella Aruba Photography.

~ Photos by Julia Renfro ~



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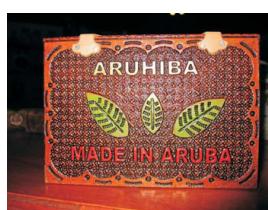
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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba.

Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi's dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba".

Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open on Sunday from 9am to 8pm. And also at Tamarijn Hotel open from 9am to 1pm. Aruhiba is only available in above mentioned stores. Visit our authentic tobacco farm where cigars are handmade.



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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more. The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

Restaurant
open daily

Monday - Sat 6 pm - 11
Sunday 5 pm - 11 pm

For more information or to make reservations, please call 586-4686. □



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CRAZY FISH MONDAY @ BUGALOE

Fresh 18oz Snapper or Grouper for only \$ 20

PALM BEACH - Fresher than fresh, is the motto of the popular Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill at De Palm Pier. Caught in the morning, served at night... That's the Bugaloe way!

Chef Marc Hernandez is proudly presenting his rich platter with an 18oz Red Snapper or Grouper, a choice depending on the catch of that day. Bugaloe is known for fun and craziness, so it was just a logical step for me to go crazy with this colorful pallet



of exquisite fish, yellow rice and rich vegetables," Chef Marc says. With a smile he adds "And that just for US\$ 20!"

And right he is, as the platter has been a hit from the start. Served with a bottle of white wine this fish feast is truly a delight on your Monday night.

Bugaloe is located at De Palm Pier in Palm Beach between RIU Palace and Radisson Resort.

OPENING HOURS

Bugaloe Beach Bar and Grill is open daily from 9am till midnight. You may go there for a casual lunch or dinner and on Mondays the special is served from 5:30pm till 10:00pm. Reservations are not needed... just follow the good music, the fun and the smiles on the beach and you will know where Bugaloe is.



SALSA WORKSHOP

Always wanted to learn how to dance Salsa? Well, you will get your chance on Wednesday evening. Reggie and Sabine from ArubaSalsa will show you the moves of Latin

dancing. You will learn how to dance Salsa and Merengue in one hour. The FREE workshop starts at 7:30pm. The popular Salsa live band "PM" will take care of the swinging Latin tunes. Fun guaranteed!

LIVE MUSIC @ BUGALOE

Tuesday 6-9pm: JOYRIDE
Wednesday 7-11pm: PM Band
Friday 6-10pm: PM Band
Sunday 6-10pm: Tsunami, Marisela, Robert Jeand'or or Abstract Dawn

At Bucuti Resort

Laura and Richie tie the knot



By Angela Munzenhofer

BUCUTI- On November 10, 2009, Laura Tripi and Richie Economos wed on Bucuti's "Dream Beach of the World". The lovebirds met at a local bar in March of 2008 through friends. They spent their early dating becoming good friends and became closer through long walks at night and long talks on the beach. 'They are

best friends'. Rich proposed to Laura on July 31st 2009 on the beach after a rainfall, "It was a moment to cherish as the clouds parted and the sun was shining through the last bit of drizzles, we had the entire beach to ourselves", stated Laura. Laura & Rich chose Aruba because of the beautiful beaches, it was a perfect spot to seal their love as it began on



Immediately following Bella Aruba Photography took the newlyweds on a "Once in a lifetime photo shoot".

The newlyweds had their dinner at the legendary Buccaneer Restaurant that evening. It was a special place for these lovebirds especially because Laura loves Turtles and Richie loves seafood. They dined with the Turtles and shark by their side as they ate Buccaneer's signature Lobster Bisque, Oyster Florentine, Seafood Platter and Richies's favorite Seafood Fettuccine al Diavolo. "We

are so pleased to have had our wedding in Aruba and every moment was special, we put our trust in Nashette and everything followed through perfect, she was our guiding light", replied the newlyweds and "Our wedding moon will always be cherished by the wonderful staff at Bucuti, our photographer who made us relaxed as we enjoyed our special moments captured by her eye and Aruba for giving us sun, sea and newfound friends". □

Photos by Angela Munzenhofer



their engagement. Nashette Wouters orchestrated the beautiful beach blessing that took place on Eagle Beach at Bucuti Resort. The romantic ceremony included an exchange of vows and rings. They both had a glow of forever love as they glared into each other's eyes and kissed as they became one under Aruba's sun.



**Don't miss our
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**A dinner
under the
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Las Ramblas
Tapas & Charcoal Grill



The menu features authentic Spanish tapas and entrees such as delicious Seafood Paella, USDA Beef Tenderloin & New Zealand Lamb Chops from the charcoal grill.

Open from 6.00pm - 10.30pm. Closed on Sundays and Wednesdays.
Reservation recommended
For reservation call 520-1100 ext. 6154

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\$19.95, All You Can Eat Dinner Buffet

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Louis Peters heading up New York tourist office

PHILIPSBURG--The St. Maarten Tourist Bureau continues to move full speed ahead with initiatives to capture the lucrative North American leisure travel market with the hiring of Louis Peters to take the helm of its New York City office.

This endeavour follows the hiring of the public relations and marketing firm KTCpr last summer and its soon-to-be launched new branding campaign and Website.

The New York office serves as an information portal for travel agents and consumers looking for information about St. Maarten, including brochure fulfilment and representation at trade shows throughout the USA.

"At a time when Caribbean destinations are marketing the

value and importance of their respective Diaspora, I believe that representation of a native son of the island's tourism product in the New York City office will add greater credibility to the island's efforts to revive and promote its exciting tourism-based economy," Peters said.

St. Maarten Tourist Bureau head Regina Labega said the bureau was pleased to have Peters representing St. Maarten. "His extensive knowledge of the destination coupled with his marketing experience and overall understanding of the industry at large will provide a strong presence in our New York office and a great asset to our tourism team," she said.

Peters was born in St. Martin, raised in New York City and returned to work in St.

Maarten in various capacities to advance the island's tourism product as an officer of the Island Gem Enterprises Ltd. NV, the original developer of Mullet Bay Resort.

Following his tenure with Island Gem Enterprises, he became a member of the Mixed Commission of the Netherlands Antilles to evaluate the socio-economic sustainability of the Netherlands Antilles in its process of constitutional change.

While serving as the representative of the Dutch Windward Islands on the Mixed Commission, Peters conducted various research works to defend the need for these smaller islands to have their own statutory Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The Chamber of Commerce

and Industry for the Dutch Windward Islands was established on March 12, 1979, and Peters served as its first Executive Secretary.

After leaving the Dutch Windward Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Peters established his own company, Destination Promotions NV, to promote St. Maarten as a preferred regional tourist destination. He represented private sectors of the Netherlands Antilles at the Caribbean Central

American Action (CCAA) during the 1980s when the Caribbean Basin Initiative was the region's principal focus in relations with the United States of America.

He also has worked with various private sector groups to improve their effective involvement in the island's tourism industry.

Peters graduated from Queens College of City University of New York, where he received his BA in economics. □

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Recession intensifies GenX discontent at work



Jon Anne Willow, co-publisher of ThirdCoastDigest.com, an online arts and culture site, is seen in her office with her employees Friday, Nov. 13, 2009, in Milwaukee. Willow is among employers who've recently been able to hire more experienced candidates for jobs traditionally filled by 20somethings.

(AP Photo/Morry Gash)

By MARTHA IRVINE,
 AP National Writer

CHICAGO — They're antsy and edgy, tired of waiting for promotion opportunities at work as their elders put off retirement. A good number of them are just waiting for the economy to pick up so they can hop to the next job, find something more fulfilling and get what they think they deserve. Oh, and they want work-life balance, too.

Sounds like Gen Y, the so-called "entitlement generation," right? Not necessarily, say people who track the generations. In these hard times, they're also hearing strong rumblings of discontent from Generation

X. They're the 32- to 44-year-olds who are wedged between baby boomers and their children, often feeling like forgotten middle siblings — and increasingly restless at work as a result.

"All of a sudden, we've gone from being the young upstarts to being the curmudgeons," says Bruce Tulgan, a generational consultant who's written books about various age groups, including his fellow Gen Xers.

This isn't the first time Gen Xers have faced tough times. They came of age during a recession and survived the dot-com bust of 2000. In recent years, though, more members of the generation —

stereotyped early on as jaded individualists — had families or began settling down in other ways. It was time, they thought, to enjoy the rewards of paying some dues.

"We were starting to buy into the system, at least to some extent," Tulgan says, "and then we got the rug pulled out from under us."

Now, in this latest recession, nearly two-thirds of baby boomer workers, ages 50 to 61, say they might have to push back their retirement, according to a recent survey from Pew Research.

Meanwhile, on the other end of the age spectrum are Gen Yers, who are often cheaper to hire and heralded for their coveted high-tech knowledge, even though many Gen Xers consider themselves just as technologically savvy.

"It's so annoying," says Lisa Chamberlain, another Gen Xer who wrote the book "Slackonomics: Generation X in the Age of Creative Destruction." "First, it was always the baby boomers overshadowing everything. Then there was this brief period in the mid-'90s where Gen X was cool.

"Now it's, 'What are the new kids doing?' It's like 'Yo, hello, the Google guys are Gen Xers.'"

They can sound a little whiny.

But there's also some evidence that Gen Xers really are being taken for granted at work.

One survey done this year for Deloitte Consulting LLP, for instance, found that nearly two-thirds of executives at large companies were most concerned about losing Gen Y employees, while less than half of them had similar concerns about losing Gen Xers.

The assumption is often that Gen Yers are the least loyal and most mobile, says Robin Erickson, a manager with

Deloitte's human capital division.

However, she points out that a companion survey of employees found that only about 37 percent of Gen Xers said they planned to stay in their current jobs after the recession ends, compared with 44 percent of Gen Yers, 50 percent of baby boomers and 52 percent of senior citizen workers who said the same.

Everyone surveyed worried about job security. Gen X and Gen Y were most likely to complain about pay. But a "lack of career progress," was by far the biggest gripe from Gen Xers, with 40 percent giving that as a reason for their restlessness, compared with 30 percent of Gen Yers, 20 percent of baby boomers and 14 percent of senior workers.

Gen Yers, meanwhile, were more likely than the other generations to cite "lack of challenges in the job" as a reason they would leave, while baby boomers more often chose "poor employee treatment during the downturn" and a "lack of trust in leadership." The Deloitte study warns of a "resume' tsunami" once economic recovery begins, especially among Gen Xers, and notes that many executives were largely unaware of employee complaints unrelated to money.

Such findings don't surprise Rich Yudhishthu, a 37-year-old Gen Xer who's a business development consultant from Minneapolis.

"The lack of promotional opportunities has pretty much killed job loyalty within a generation," he says.

Liza Potts, a 35-year-old professor at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va., agrees, but also notes that the disillusionment took hold for many of her peers as far back as childhood.

"Many of my friends had hoped to have jobs like their parents — places they would stay forever that would take care of them like they did their parents. But then we saw that start to crumble for our folks," she says, recalling friends whose fathers and mothers got laid off from companies such as IBM or had to relocate.

Now worried about their own foreclosures, debt and unemployment, her generation is left to do the soul-searching their parents did.

"Is there still time to become something different? Must we just accept where we are? Is there time to innovate elsewhere?" asks Potts who left her own career in the software and Internet industry for a life in academia. It's meant less money, she says, but also more freedom to choose her work hours and projects.

In Chicago, 40-year-old real estate agent Adon Navarette has taken on extra jobs to make it, from consultant for an energy supply company to starting his own health and wellness business. He's heard his peers sniping about other generations, but also thinks their experience with other rough economic patches makes them resilient, too.

It's a pivotal moment, he says. "What's going to define me as a Gen Xer is how I come out of this. What's going to define me is, 'What have I done to allow myself to take advantage of the market when the market turns around?'" he says.

Sometimes, it means working for less money.

Jon Anne Willow, co-publisher of ThirdCoastDigest.com, an online arts and culture site in Milwaukee, is among employers who've recently been able to hire more experienced candidates for jobs traditionally filled by 20somethings. □

Obama unlikely to push China hard on currency

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — In his visit to Beijing this week, President Barack Obama is expected to tread lightly when pressing China to let its currency rise against the dollar.

Doing so would benefit the U.S. economy by making American-made goods cheaper in China, but Obama is reluctant to upset Beijing.

China is the No. 1 lender to the U.S. at a time when the latest annual budget deficit hit a record \$1.42 trillion. That makes for a lot of Treasurys to be sold. China has expressed concerns that the falling dollar threatens the value of its existing U.S. holdings.

The United States also needs China's help in dealing with foreign policy threats. Those include curbing the nuclear ambitions of North Korea and Iran.

There's another reason for a gentler U.S. stance: Analysts believe China already signaled last week that it was preparing to let its currency rise against the dollar. That shift could eventually aid U.S. manufacturers. It might also feed a U.S. economic rebound.

But China is also applying some pressure on the U.S. about its currency.

On Sunday, China's top bank regulator said the weak dollar and low interest rates were distorting global asset prices and posing an "insurmountable risk to the recovery of the world economy," according to a transcript of a speech he made at a financial forum in Beijing.

The regulator, Liu Mingkang, said the declining dollar and low interest rates were encouraging a "massive" U.S. dollar carry trade — the practice of borrowing money at low rates in one currency to invest in assets in another currency that offer a higher return.

Analysts say China will likely wait months before tweaking the yuan-dollar exchange rate, which now stands at about 6.8 yuan to the dollar. Beijing doesn't want to appear to be bowing to U.S. pressure. Even then, it will take time for the U.S. to benefit.

Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Economy.com, says he expects the Chinese to begin allowing the yuan to rise against the dollar by next spring, at a rate of about 5 percent a year.

At that pace, it would take until around 2015 for the two currencies to be in balance — a process Zandi said could help narrow the U.S.

trade gap with China, which last year hit \$268 billion.

U.S. manufacturers won't likely be satisfied. They want the administration to push Beijing to raise the yuan's value further and faster. Their exports have been hurt by China's move last year to peg the yuan to the dollar. They contend the yuan is undervalued by up to 40 percent.

From 2005 to 2008, the Chinese had allowed the yuan to rise about 20 percent against the dollar. It started pegging its currency to the dollar in mid-2008, once the global recession began hurting China's exports.

Normally, a low dollar would make U.S. goods cheaper for hundreds of millions of Chinese consumers. But since the Chinese have kept the yuan tightly linked to the dollar, U.S. exporters haven't been able to capitalize.

"Obama will raise the currency issue (during his visit), but he is in no position to push the Chinese simply because he lacks any levers to make the Chinese do something they do not want to do," said Eswar Prasad, an economist at Cornell University and senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

China's central bank made its subtle yet surprising shift in the wording of its exchange-rate policy on Thursday. In the arcane language that governs the \$3-trillion-a-day currency markets, many analysts read the shift as a signal that Beijing was getting ready to let the yuan resume rising against the dollar.

The dollar has been sliding in value against many major currencies. U.S. exports to Europe have benefited, because the dollar has fallen about 18 percent against the euro since early March.

And since the Chinese have linked their currency to the dollar, the dollar's fall has benefited them, too. It's made Chinese products cheaper in Europe and elsewhere where currencies have risen against the dollar. If Beijing let the yuan rise, those Chinese goods would become more expensive.

For now, a weak yuan isn't all bad for the U.S. It's meant a break for American consumers and retailers, such as Wal-Mart, that buy goods imported from China.

But many countries have complained about the weaker dollar and China's close link to it. Some, such as Thailand, South Korea and Russia, have sought to stem the dollar's rise against their currencies by buying dollars. □

American manufacturing groups blame the low yuan for contributing to the loss of 5.6 million manufacturing jobs in the past decade. During that time, America's trade gap with China has soared.

"The rising trade deficit is an ominous sign for an economic recovery anytime soon," Scott Paul of the Alliance for American Manufacturing said after the government reported Friday that the deficit with China jumped sharply in September.

The issue has riled some on Capitol Hill at a time when the U.S. unemployment rate has hit a 26-year high of 10.2 percent and lawmakers are under pressure to help create jobs. Legislation in the House and Senate would allow for tariffs on Chinese goods if Beijing's currency policies don't change.

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation finance meetings in Singapore last week, repeated his mantra that "it's very important to the United States that we have a strong dollar."

The administration has done nothing to halt the dollar's slide. Some have seen that as a signal that the U.S. feels a weak dollar relative to major currencies, other than the yuan, helps U.S. exports.

But with the United States reliant on foreigners to finance nearly \$8 trillion in publicly held debt, it can't openly back a weaker dollar. Doing so would cause investors to dump dollars. The dollar would sink, U.S. interest rates would likely surge and the fledgling U.S. economic recovery could risk collapse.

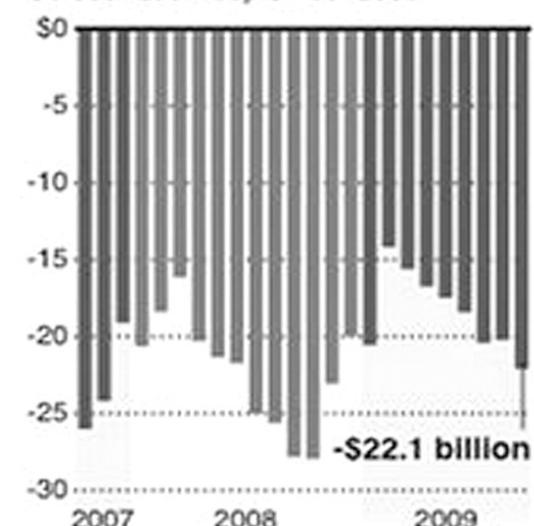
Many economists contend that even if China let its currency rise sharply against the dollar, Beijing would still enjoy trade advantages. Those include its low-wage work force and barriers it's erected to limit imports of U.S. and other foreign-made goods. □

Trade with China

Analysts believe China signaled that it was preparing to let its currency rise against the dollar. That shift could eventually aid U.S. manufacturers. It might also feed a U.S. economic rebound.

U.S. trade deficit with China

October 2007-September 2009



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

AP

Graphic shows the monthly U.S. trade deficit with China over the past three years

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Human Rights Watch slams Uganda AIDS bill

KAMPALA (AFP) – Human Rights Watch on Friday criticised Uganda's HIV/AIDS bill, some of whose clauses call for mandatory testing of pregnant women, sex offenders and victims, and disclosure of HIV status. The New York-based group said the bill "promotes dangerous and discredited approaches to the AIDS epidemic".

The HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Bill also requires that a person convicted of prostitution, drug use or possession of hypodermic needle be subjected to HIV testing for purposes of criminal investigation.

Pregnant women and their partners "shall be subjected" to routine testing, but the law does not state whether consent is required.

Anyone who fails to inform his or her sexual partner of their HIV status will be fined or imprisoned and the bill criminalises intentional transmission of HIV.

HRW argued that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to determine who infected who in a court of law and that it makes ignorance of one's status an effective defence.

The group nonetheless praised

Disney World takes steps to fight swine flu

ORLANDO, Fla. – How about some hand sanitizer before greeting Mickey Mouse? In an effort to halt the spread of the swine flu, Walt Disney World has installed dozens of hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the theme park, hotel lobbies and character meet-and-greet areas.

Disney is also reminding visitors of basic health safety tips, like covering their mouths while sneezing and washing hands regularly, on fliers that list park hours and show times. In all, more than 60 bulk hand sanitizer dispensers have been added at Disney World and Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif.

The health precautions are the most visible steps taken by any of Orlando's major theme parks since the swine flu outbreak last spring.



AIDS ribbons. Human Rights Watch on Friday criticised Uganda's HIV/AIDS bill, some of whose clauses call for mandatory testing of pregnant women, sex offenders and victims, and disclosure of HIV status.

(AFP/File)

clauses in the latest version of the bill that protect against discrimination and breach of confidentiality. □

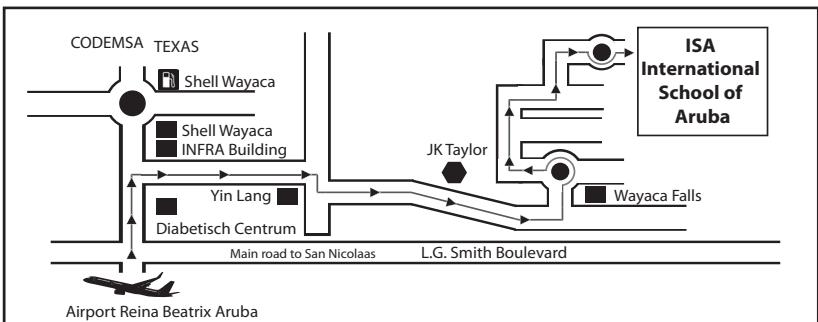
The International School of Aruba 80 Years of History and Excellence Located in Wayaca Residence

Did you know there has been an International / American school on the island of Aruba for 80 years? Originally founded to provide education in English for employees of the Lago refinery, the Lago School opened in Seroe Colorado on the south-eastern end of the island in September of 1929. Nearly 40 years later, the school was made available for all island residents on a tuition basis. With the closing of the refinery in 1985, concerned parents, wanting to continue the high quality English language education the school provided, came together and formed the International School of Aruba (ISA).

ISA remained on the original campus in Seroe Colorado for 20 years though the school community desired to relocate the school to a more central location on the island. Ultimately, the parent board of the school called upon International Schools Services (ISS) of Princeton, New Jersey, to assist with the relocation of the school and to build a new campus. ISS is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to educational excellence for children attending international schools around the world. Since 2004, ISS has owned and governed ISA and in August, 2005, ISA was relocated to a newly constructed facility close to the airport in the Wayaca Residence.

ISA is a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 (ages 3 – 18) school accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The ISA mission is to motivate and prepare students to achieve their academic and personal best in an

English language, college/university preparatory program that embraces diversity while encouraging leadership, character, and community service. ISA students are transported on ISA's own buses each day to and from their homes. Upon arrival at the school, ISA students participate in a child-centered program based on educational best practices, high educational standards and expectations. In addition, ISA offers a Dutch language program which is recognized by the Nederlands Onderwijs in het Buitenland (NOB). The Dutch program is an integral part of ISA preparing students for education in Holland. The advanced placement (AP) college level courses offered at ISA further enhance a student's opportunity to attend the best colleges and universities around the world. Families interested in knowing more about ISA are welcome to visit the Wayaca Residence campus at any time. The school's website, www.isaruba.com, is another suggested source of information that provides a view of the school.



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AIDS does not discriminate. Why do you?
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Jellyfish swarm northward in warming world

By MICHAEL CASEY,
AP Environmental Writer

KOKONOGI, Japan—A blood-orange blob the size of a small refrigerator emerged from the dark waters, its venomous tentacles trapped in a fishing net. Within minutes, hundreds more were being hauled up, a pulsating mass crowding out the catch of mackerel and sea bass.

The fishermen leaned into the nets, grunting and grumbling as they tossed the translucent jellyfish back into the bay, giants weighing up to 200 kilograms (450 pounds), marine invaders that are putting the men's livelihoods at risk.

The venom of the Nomura, the world's largest jellyfish, a creature up to 2 meters (6 feet) in diameter, can ruin a whole day's catch by tainting or killing fish stung when ensnared with them in the maze of nets here in northwest Japan's Wakasa Bay.

"Some fishermen have just stopped fishing," said Taiichiro Hamano, 67. "When you pull in the nets and see jellyfish, you get depressed."

This year's jellyfish swarm is one of the worst he has seen, Hamano said. Once considered a rarity occurring every 40 years, they are now an almost annual occurrence along several thousand kilometers (miles) of Japanese coast, and far beyond Japan.

Scientists believe climate change — the warming of oceans — has allowed some of the almost 2,000 jellyfish species to expand their ranges, appear earlier in the year and increase overall numbers, much as warming has helped ticks, bark beetles and other pests to spread to new latitudes.

The gelatinous seaborne creatures are blamed for decimating fishing industries in the Bering and Black seas, forcing the shutdown of seaside power and desalination plants in Japan, the Middle East and Africa, and terrorizing beachgoers worldwide, the U.S. National Science Foundation says.

A 2008 foundation study cited research estimating that people are stung 500,000 times every

year — sometimes multiple times — in Chesapeake Bay on the U.S. East Coast, and 20 to 40 die each year in the Philippines from jellyfish stings.

In 2007, a salmon farm in Northern Ireland lost its more than 100,000 fish to an attack by the mauve stinger, a jellyfish normally known for stinging bathers in warm Mediterranean waters. Scientists cite its migration to colder Irish seas as evidence of global warming.

Increasingly polluted waters — off China, for example — boost growth of the microscopic plankton that "jellies" feed upon, while overfishing has eliminated many of the jellyfish's predators and cut down on competitors for plankton feed. "These increases in jellyfish should be a warning sign that our oceans are stressed and unhealthy," said Lucas

Brotz, a University of British Columbia researcher.

Here on the rocky Echizen coast, amid floodlights and the roar of generators, fishermen at Kokonogi's bustling port made quick work of the day's catch — packaging glistening fish and squid in Styrofoam boxes for shipment to market. In rain jackets and hip waders, they crowded around a visitor to tell how the jellyfish have upended a way of life in which men worked fishing trawlers on the high seas in their younger days and later eased toward retirement by joining one of the cooperatives operating nets set in the bay.

It was a good living, they said, until the jellyfish began inundating the bay in 2002, sometimes numbering 500 million, reducing fish catches by 30 percent and slashing prices by half over concerns about quality.

Two nets in Echizen burst last month during a typhoon because of the sheer weight of the jellyfish, and off the east coast jelly-filled nets capsized a 10-ton trawler as its crew tried to pull them up. The three fishermen were rescued.

"We have been getting rid of jellyfish. But no matter how hard we try, the jellyfish keep coming and coming," said

Fumio Oma, whose crew is out of work after their net broke under the weight of thousands of jellyfish. "We need the government's help to get rid of the jellyfish."

The invasions cost the industry up to 30 billion yen (\$332 million) a year, and tens of thousands of fishermen have sought government compensation, said scientist Shin-ichi Uye, Japan's leading expert on the problem.

Hearing fishermen's pleas, Uye, who had been studying zooplankton, became obsessed with the little-studied Nomura's jellyfish, scientifically known as *Nemopilema nomurai*, which at its biggest looks like a giant mushroom trailing dozens of noodle-like tentacles.

"No one knew their life cycle, where they came from, where they reproduced," said Uye, 59. "This jellyfish was like an alien."

He artificially bred Nomura's jellyfish in his Hiroshima University lab, learning about their life cycle, growth rates and feeding habits. He traveled by ferry between China to Japan this year to confirm they were riding currents to Japanese waters.

He concluded China's coastal waters offered a perfect breeding ground: Agricultural and sewage runoff are spurring plankton growth, and fish catches are declining. The waters of the Yellow Sea, meanwhile, have warmed as much as 1.7 degrees C (3 degrees F) over the past quarter-century.

"The jellyfish are becoming more and more dominant," said Uye, as he sliced off samples of dead jellyfish on the deck of an Echizen fishing boat. "Their growth rates are quite amazing."

The slight, bespectacled scientist is unafraid of controversy, having lobbied his government tirelessly to help the fishermen, and angered Chinese colleagues by arguing their government must help solve the problem, comparing it to the effects of acid rain that reaches Japan from China.

"The Chinese people say they will think about this after they



This Oct. 14, 2009 photo shows a giant jellyfish drifting off Kokonogi in western Japan. Once considered a rarity occurring every 40 years, jellyfish swarms are now an almost annual occurrence along several thousand kilometers (miles) of Japanese coast, and far beyond Japan, decimating local fishing industries from the Japan Sea to the Black Sea.

(AP Photo/Junji Kurokawa)

get rich, but it might be too late by then," he said.

A U.S. marine scientist, Jennifer Purcell of Western Washington University, has found a correlation between warming and jellyfish on a much larger scale, in at least 11 locations, including the Mediterranean and North seas, and Chesapeake and Narragansett bays.

"It's hard to deny that there is an effect from warming," Purcell said.

"There keeps coming up again and again examples of jellyfish populations being high when it's warmer." Some tropical species, on the other hand, appear to decline when water temperatures rise too high.

Even if populations explode, their numbers may be limited in the long term by other factors, including food and currents. In a paper last year,

researchers concluded jellyfish numbers in the Bering Sea — which by 2000 were 40 times higher than in 1982 — declined even as temperatures have hit record highs.

"They were still well ahead of their historic averages for that region," said co-author Lorenzo Ciannelli of Oregon State University. "But clearly jellyfish populations are not merely a function of water temperature."

Addressing the surge in jellyfish blooms in most places will require long-term fixes, such as introducing fishing quotas and pollution controls, as well as capping greenhouse gas emissions to control global warming, experts said.

In the short term, governments are left with few options other than warning bathers or bailing out cash-strapped fishermen.

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Film academy throws a private Oscar party



Filmmaker Roger Corman, left, actress Lauren Bacall, center, and cinematographer Gordon Willis pose with their honorary Oscars following The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences 2009 Governors Awards, Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009, in Los Angeles.

(AP Photo/Chris Pizzello)

By SANDY COHEN,

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES — Without the burden of a live worldwide broadcast, members of the film academy threw themselves a lively yet relaxed dinner party to honor the first Oscar winners of the season.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences broke with tradition and presented its honorary Oscars off-camera Saturday night, months ahead of the televised ceremony in March.

Actress Lauren Bacall, B-movie king Roger Corman and "Godfather" cinematographer Gordon Willis each received Oscar statuettes during the black-tie banquet at the Grand Ballroom above the Kodak Theatre, the same room where the annual post-Academy Awards Governors Ball is held.

In addition, producer John Calley was honored with the Irving J. Thalberg Memorial Award, recognizing career accomplishments that include "Catch-22," "The Remains of the Day" and "The Da Vinci Code."

Each of the recipients was chosen by the academy's Board of Governors.

Tom Hanks, Jack Nicholson, Annette Bening, Morgan Freeman and Steven Spielberg were among the 600 invited guests at the inaugural

Governors Awards event.

"We're gathered here together, all artists, celebrating excellence without any television cameras — isn't it great?" said veteran producer Norman Jewison.

Warren Beatty agreed: "It's so much better ... that nobody's worrying whether 36.5 million people are watching us or 29.2," he said.

Guests drank Champagne and dined on filet mignon as each honoree was celebrated with tributes, toasts and a generous montage of film clips — leisurely elements not possible in previous years when special-Oscar presentations were built into the already-crowded Oscar broadcast.

Corman, 83, was the first to be honored Saturday night. The longtime producer-director was lauded for being a champion of independent and efficient filmmaking and for promoting women to positions of leadership long before it was popular.

Quentin Tarantino said the man behind films such as "Bloody Mama" and "X: The Man With the X-Ray Eyes," inspired him to become a filmmaker. He praised Corman for his "undeniable impact on the industry, both as a business and as an art form."

"The movie lovers of planet earth thank you," Tarantino said.

Ron Howard credited Corman with giving him his start as a filmmaker, saying working for Corman was "a badge of honor."

Corman's advice to his peers? "Keep gambling. Keep taking chances."

Kirk Douglas honored Bacall, his friend for more than 60 years, and confessed that he once tried to seduce her — "without success."

Anjelica Huston presented the award to the legendary actress, saying she "defines what it means to be a great actress and also a huge movie star" and praising her "steadfastness, honesty and extraordinary beauty."

Ever feisty, the 85-year-old actress shooed away an escort who tried to help her to the

podium to accept her Oscar. She spoke of her late husband, "my great love" Humphrey Bogart, and her dashing leading men: Douglas, Gregory Peck and Henry Fonda.

Bacall said she did not expect to receive an Oscar but gratefully welcomed the honor.

"The thought when I get home that I'm going to have a two-legged man in my room is so exciting," she quipped.

Willis, whose cinematography credits include "The Godfather," "Annie Hall" and "All the President's Men," was honored for his decades of work. He was nominated for an Oscar twice: For "Zelig" in 1983 and "The Godfather: Part III" in 1990.

Presenter Jeff Bridges noted Willis' "unparalleled mastery

of light, shadow, color and motion."

Willis, 78, told his industry peers, "Do your best. Take care of your kids."

Health concerns kept Calley from accepting his award in person, so seven previous Thalberg Award winners did it for him, including Spielberg, Jewison, Beatty and George Lucas. They lauded Calley for his willingness to support creativity throughout his career.

"Please know how proud all of us are to welcome you to our ranks," Spielberg said.

Though not televised, the Governors Awards were taped and portions will be shown during the 82nd annual Academy Awards on March 7, 2010. □

'2012' has worldwide box-office bang of \$225M

By DAVID GERMAIN,

AP Movie Writer

LOS ANGELES — Doom spelled dollars at the box office as the global-disaster tale "2012" opened at No. 1 domestically with \$65 million and pulled in \$225 million worldwide.

The Sony Pictures action saga tells the story of a scramble to save remnants of humanity aboard giant arks as the earth's crust shifts and flood waters pour over most of the planet. With a cast led by John Cusack, Danny Glover and Chiwetel Ejiofor, "2012" was directed by doomsday specialist Roland Emmerich ("Independence Day," "The Day After Tomorrow").

Overseas, "2012" did \$17.2 million in France, \$15.3 million in Russia, \$9.9 million in South Korea and \$8.1 million in Spain.

Domestically, "2012" came in just shy of the \$68.7 million opening weekend for "The Day After Tomorrow."

But Sony reported that its global total was the best ever for an original movie not based on an established franchise, brand or best-selling novel.

"Roland is that type of filmmaker that casts his net really wide," said Rory Bruer, head of distribution for Sony. "The story is something people could really relate to. It's a story of the survival of humanity."

"Disney's A Christmas Carol" slipped to No. 2 with \$22.3 million, down only 26 percent from its No. 1 opening gross a weekend earlier. The Jim Carrey holiday adventure raised its 10-day total to \$63.3 million.

Big films typically can drop 50 percent or more in the second weekend, but the strong hold for "A Christmas Carol" indicates it could have a long shelf life through the holidays.

Lionsgate's acclaimed drama "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire" broke into the top-10 as it expanded to more theaters after a huge debut in limited release the previous

weekend.

Finishing at No. 4, "Precious" took in \$6.1 million in 174 theaters, averaging \$35,000 a cinema and raising its 10-day total to \$8.9 million. That compared to a \$19,095 average in 3,404 theaters for "2012."

With a cast that includes Mo'Nique, Mariah Carey and Lenny Kravitz, "Precious" stars newcomer Gabourey Sidibe as a Harlem teen pulling herself out of an abyss of illiteracy, incest and domestic abuse.

"Michael Jackson's "This Is It" added \$5.1 million domestically to raise its total to \$67.2 million. The Sony release became the all-time top-grossing music documentary, passing the \$65.3 million total of last year's "Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert."

The weekend's other new wide release, Focus Features' rock 'n' roll comedy "Pirate Radio," opened a weak No. 11 with \$2.9 million in 882 theaters, averaging \$3,253 a cinema.

The ensemble cast of "Pirate Radio" features Philip Seymour Hoffman, Bill Nighy and Kenneth Branagh in a story about 1960s disc jockeys blasting illicit rock music into stodgy Britain from an offshore radio station aboard a tanker.

Starting in limited release, Fox Searchlight's animated comedy "Fantastic Mr. Fox" drew big audiences with \$260,000 in four theaters, for a whopping average of \$65,000 a cinema. The film expands to nationwide release the day before Thanksgiving.

George Clooney, Meryl Streep and Bill Murray lead the voice cast of "Fantastic Mr. Fox," adapted by director Wes Anderson from the Roald Dahl children's book about a poultry-thieving fox and three evil farmers.

Paramount's micro-budgeted horror flick "Paranormal Activity" pulled in \$4.2 million to cross the \$100 million mark. □



On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Monday, November 16, 2009



In this June 1, 2009 file photo reviewed by the U.S. military, Chinese Uighur Guantanamo detainees show a home-made note to visiting members of the media, at Camp Iguana detention facility, at Guantanamo Bay U.S. Naval Base, Cuba. The Supreme Court said Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2009, it will hear a new case about the rights of Guantanamo detainees, this time involving prisoners who remain in custody even after the Pentagon determines they're not a threat to the United States.

Associated Press

Dozens of Gitmo detainees finally get day in court

PETE YOST,
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — In courtrooms barred to the public, dozens of terror suspects are pleading for their freedom from the Guantanamo Bay prison, sometimes even testifying on their own behalf by video from the U.S. naval base in Cuba.

Complying with a Supreme Court ruling last year, 15 federal judges in the U.S. courthouse here are giving detainees their day in court after years behind bars half a world away from their homelands.

The judges have found the government's evidence against 30 detainees wanting and ordered their release.

That number could rise significantly because the judges are on track to hear challenges from dozens more prisoners.

Scooped up along with hard-core terrorist suspects in Afghanistan, Pakistan and elsewhere, these 30 detainees stand in stark contrast to the 10 prisoners whom the Obama administration targeted for prosecution Friday for plotting the Sept. 11 and other terrorist attacks. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the professed mastermind of 9/11, and four of his alleged henchmen are

headed for a federal civilian trial in New York; five others, including a top suspect in the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole off Yemen, will be tried by a military commission.

More detainees are expected to soon be added to the prosecution list. But there will still be plenty of cases left among the 215 detainees now at Guantanamo to keep the judges here busy as they work to clear a legal morass the Bush administration created after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Bush administration Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld once promised Guantanamo held "the worst of the worst." The judges here have rejected pleas for release from eight detainees, but they have concluded the government does not even have enough evidence to keep 30 other detainees behind bars.

"There is absolutely no reason for this court to presume that the facts contained in the government's exhibits are accurate," District Judge Gladys Kessler wrote in ordering the release of Alla Ali Bin Ali Ahmed. He was repatriated to Yemen after a seven-year stay at Guantanamo, where he was brought as a teenager.

Continued on Next Page

Parties split on New York trials of alleged terrorists



From left, Gov. Quinn listens as Sen. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.), speaks flanked by Rep. Mike Boland, D-East Moline, and State Rep. Pat Verschoore, D-Milan during a news conference, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009, in Moline, Ill. regarding the Thomson Correctional Center and the possibility of the Obama administration using the facility to house federal prisoners, particularly, those formerly held at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

Associated Press

JIM ABRAMS,

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bringing those accused in the Sept. 11 attacks to New York for trial would increase the security threat to the city and give radical Islamists a platform to propagate their ideology, former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said Sunday.

Continued on Page B4

In first visit to China, Obama walks a tightrope

JENNIFER LOVEN
AP White House
Correspondent

SHANGHAI (AP) — President Barack Obama is walking a tightrope on his first trip to China, seeking to enlist help in tackling urgent global problems while weighing when and how — or if — he should raise traditional human rights concerns.

Obama arrived in Shanghai late at night, in a driving rain, hustling through a phalanx of umbrella-holding dignitaries to reach his limousine.

Continued on Page B6



Geeky 'tweeters' to report on space shuttle launch

MARCI DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida

(AP) — Fingers will be flying when space shuttle Atlantis blasts off Monday: About 100 of NASA's geekiest fans will be on hand, pecking away at iPhones, BlackBerrys, laptops and other Twittering gadgets. They plan to let loose with electronic messages — provided they aren't so swept away by the afternoon liftoff that they fall uncharacteristically silent for a moment or two.

The tweeps, as they're called, represent 21 states plus the District of Columbia, as well as five countries, including Morocco and New Zealand. They're traveling at their own expense.

NASA estimates the 100 have more than 150,000 Twitter followers. It's a dream outreach program for a space agency looking to drum up support.

"I'll be uploading stuff as it happens," promised Steve Wake, 38, a computer programmer who flew in from Denver. "On launch day, who knows? I may be too excited about everything else to even think about doing that stuff. When it's over with, I'm sure I will."

Laura Burns already has a strategy. She figures she'll have the words typed in and her finger hovering over the button so she can send a tweet at the moment of liftoff.

"I'll have to be like juggling my iPhone and my camera and my eyes, and trying to get everything all at once," said Burns, 33, a software systems engineer from Columbia, Maryland. She's using the Twitter name "moonrangerlaura" to chronicle her entire trip — including the drive to Cape Canaveral and a pit stop for MoonPie pastries.

For the first time ever, NASA last month invited its Twitter followers to sign up online for the chance to see a space shuttle launch up close.

The 100 slots — and 50 backup positions — filled in less than 20 minutes on Oct. 16.

The two-day gathering got under way Sunday at Kennedy Space Center with talks by NASA officials, including the first Twittering astronaut, Michael Massimino, aka Astro_Mike. The discussions were streamed live on the Internet, and the "tweetup" gathering was near the top of Twitter's trending topics Sunday morning.

Nearly half the attendees are from Florida, making for an easier trip, especially if the mission ends up being delayed. Atlantis' six astronauts have thousands of pounds (kilograms) of spare parts to deliver to the International Space Station. The 11-day flight will keep the astronauts in orbit over the Thanksgiving holiday.

Monday's launch time is 2:28 p.m. (1928 GMT). Excellent weather is forecast.

With only six shuttle flights remaining and still no word from the White House on a future course for astronauts, NASA is tapping into social media — Twitter, Facebook and the like — to spread its stay-in-space message.

Astronauts have been tweeting from Earth and orbit since spring. While NASA already has held a few of the tweetups — so-called meetups of people who use Twitter — it's the first for Kennedy Space Center, a high-security area requiring government clearance.

Even the most staid NASA types see the benefit of reaching out to a younger, hipper crowd.

Atlantis commander Charles Hobaugh — who acknowledged last month he doesn't even text message — assigned the crew's Twittering tasks to Dr. Robert Satcher Jr. Satcher, who will become the first orthopedic surgeon in space, uses the handle ZeroG_



The crew of space shuttle Atlantis, from left, mission specialist Leland Melvin, pilot Butch Willmore, commander Charles Hobaugh and mission specialist's Randy Bresnik, Mike Foreman and Robert Satcher gather for photos after arriving at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Thursday, Nov. 12, 2009. The STS-129 mission is targeted for a Nov. 16, launch.

Associated Press

MD.

"It's exciting that this is generating more interest in space exploration and certainly interest in the last few missions of the shuttle, which we hope are not the last few missions of the shuttle," Satcher said.

With five children of his own, the director of NASA's space shuttle program appreciates the importance of reaching out to the next generation.

"It's the right thing to do, is to use the tools available and get

them excited about things that are real, not virtual," program director John Shannon said.

Neal Wiser, a 41-year-old Internet marketing strategist from Philadelphia, is fulfilling a lifelong dream. The biggest thing he's ever seen lift off is an 8-foot 2model rocket.

This is Wiser's third NASA tweetup. He'll be blogging and Twittering throughout.

"We're all geeks together," he said. "I actually joked to my wife that I'm turning into a NASA groupie." □

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PARTIES SPLIT**Continued from Page B1**

Giuliani's view that the Obama administration is erring in trying Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and four others near the site of the destroyed World Trade Center was echoed by other Republicans on the Sunday television news programs.

Democrats defended the decision of Attorney General Eric Holder to try the five in New York where more than 2,000 civilians were killed on Sept. 11. If someone murders Americans in this country, they should be tried in the U.S., said Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"I don't think we should run and hide and cower. Let's use our system," Leahy said.

Republicans argued that the five are war criminals and should be tried in the military tribunals where some other Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, detainees will be judged.

They disputed administration arguments that these five were conspirators to a crime committed on American soil.

"What the Obama administration is telling us loud and clear is that both in substance and reality the war on terror from their point of view is over," Giuliani said. Moving the case to a civilian court,

he said, "seems to be an overconcern with the rights of terrorists and a lack of concern for the rights of the public."

The former mayor was similarly critical of the administration's handling of the shooting spree at Fort Hood last week. President Barack Obama, he said, "doesn't get the fact that there is an Islamic war against us."

Rep. Pete Hoekstra of Michigan, top Republican on the House intelligence committee, said the trial could expose the people of New York to years of propaganda from the defendants.

"We are now going to rip that wound wide open and it's going to stay open two, three, four years," he said. "They are going to do everything they can to disrupt it and make it a circus" for their radical ideology, he said.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, a former senator from New York, said she had no problem with Holder's decision to try Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks, and the others in the city. She said it was important to note that New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and other officials believe that holding the trials in the city is appropriate.

Sen. Jack Reed, a Rhode Island Democrat, said there was no better group of people to determine

the guilt or innocence and the punishment for these men "than the people in New York who saw the towers fall."

Reed added that Mohammed and the others wanted to be considered as holy warriors, and "if we try them before military officers, that image of a soldier will be portrayed by the Islamic community. That's not the image we want."

Republicans also took issue with a statement from a White House official that the administration may buy a near-empty prison in northwestern Illinois to incarcerate suspected terrorists now housed at Guantanamo.

"Why move them into the United States while we are still under the threat from radical jihadists?" Hoekstra asked.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said moving prisoners to Illinois could be a "huge issue" in that state, particularly in the Senate race in the state next year to fill Obama's seat.

Giuliani appeared on "Fox News Sunday," ABC's "This Week" and CNN's "State of the Union." Reed and McConnell were also on Fox. Clinton spoke on ABC and NBC's "Meet the Press."

Hoekstra and Leahy appeared on CBS' "Face the Nation." □

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is where Marielys started her
tiny little shop seven years ago*

Authorities acting on tip search for missing girl

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. – Authorities acted on a tip Sunday and searched a wide area in south-central North Carolina trying to find a 5-year-old girl reported missing by her mother, who has been charged with human trafficking and child abuse involving prostitution.

Capt. Charles Kimble of the Fayetteville Police Department said several agencies spent the day looking for signs of Shaniya Davis between Spring Lake and Sanford, which are about 25 miles apart. Kimble would not elaborate on what information officers had received. They suspended the search at dark. The area included woods and some homes, police said.

"We're following up on a tip. It seems to be good, so we're out there looking," Kimble said.

The N.C. Highway Patrol sent a helicopter to aid in the search, Lt. Everett Clendenin said. Shaniya hasn't been seen since Tuesday, when a surveillance camera recorded the man charged in her kidnapping carrying the girl into a hotel room.

Earlier Sunday, authorities arrested Antoinette Nicole Davis, Shaniya's mother. The charges against Davis are related to her daughter's disappearance, said Theresa Chance, a spokeswoman for Fayetteville police.

According to arrest documents cited by The Fayetteville Observer, Davis "knowingly

provide(d) Shaniya Davis with the intent that she be held in sexual servitude" and she "permit(ted) an act of prostitution."

Shaniya had only been living with her mother since last month. Davis reported the girl missing Tuesday morning from a mobile home community in Fayetteville, and authorities began searching nearby wooded areas.

Camera footage showed Mario Andrette McNeill carrying Shaniya into a hotel room, and he was arrested and charged with kidnapping on Friday. A kidnapping charge against a man described as Davis' boyfriend was dropped.

Authorities have said McNeill admitted to taking the girl, though his attorney says he will plead not guilty to the charge.

They have not said if McNeill and Davis knew each other.

Police said a hotel worker spotted a child matching Shaniya's description at the hotel in Sanford, about 40 miles from Fayetteville. Relatives helped confirm that the child on the recording was Shaniya.

Fayetteville police officer Brian Gainey said Davis did not have an attorney and was scheduled to appear in court Monday.

Shaniya's father, Bradley Lockhart, told The Associated Press that he raised his daughter for several years but last month decided to let her



In this undated photo provided by the City of Fayetteville Police Department, Antoinette Nicole Davis, the mother of 5-year-old Shaniya Davis, faces a child abuse charge involving prostitution as well as filing a false police report, according to a news release from the Fayetteville Police Department.

Associated Press

stay with her mother.

"I should've never let her go over there," he said Saturday.

Lockhart said he did not know McNeill. □

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 daily: 4:00 6:30
 matinee: 1:30 late show: **NEW**

R **PRECIOUS**
 daily: 6:00 8:30
 matinee: 1:00 3:30 late show: 11:00

PG-13 **TENDERNESS**
 daily: 9:00
 matinee: 12:00 late show: 11:30

PG-13 **PUSH *** THURSDAY THRU SATURDAY ONLY! *****
 daily: 5:00 7:30 10:00
 matinee: 12:00 2:30 late show: 12:30

PG-13 **PUSH *** SUNDAY THRU WEDNESDAY *****
 daily: 9:00
 matinee: 12:00 late show: 11:30

R **THE STEPFATHER**
 daily: 4:15 6:45
 matinee: 2:00 9:15 late show: 11:45

PG **THIS IS IT:MICHAEL JACKSON**
 daily: 6:00 8:30
 matinee: 1:00 3:30 late show: 11:00

G **SINTERKLAAS EN HET VERDWEVEN PAKJESBOOT**
 daily: 4:30 6:45
 matinee: 12:00 2:15 late show: *** STARTS SUNDAY ***

AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG **WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE**
 daily: 5:00 7:15 9:30
 matinee: 12:30 2:45 late show: 11:45



PG-13 **2012**
 daily: 4:30 8:00
 matinee: 1:00 late show: 11:15

PG **ASTRO BOY**
 daily: 4:30 2:15
 matinee: 12:00 late show:

R **LAW ABIDING CITIZEN**
 daily: 9:15
 matinee: late show: 12:00

PG **THIS IS IT:MICHAEL JACKSON**
 daily: 5:45 8:15
 matinee: 12:45 3:15 late show: 11:00

PG-13 **COUPLES RETREAT**
 daily: 5:00 7:30 10:00
 matinee: 12:00 2:30 late show: 12:15

PG-13 **THE STEPFATHER**
 daily: 9:15
 matinee: late show: 11:45

PG **AMELIA**
 daily: 6:45 9:15
 matinee: late show: 11:45

PG **A CHRISTMAS CAROL 3D**
 daily: 4:45 7:00
 matinee: 12:15 2:30 late show:

Matinee: sat & sun | Late show: fri & sat

TIGHTROPE
Continued from Page B1

Worshippers walk into a performance hall, being used as a temporary worship space, to attend a service in Beijing, China, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009. Shouwang church, one of China's largest underground churches was forced to find a new last-minute worship space again Sunday, after they lost their rental space in a case that's being called a test for U.S. President Barack Obama as he arrives on his first visit to the country.

Associated Press

On Monday, the president is holding talks with local politicians and, in one of the marquee events of his weeklong Asian trip, conducting an American-style town hall discussion with Chinese university students. Thirty years after the start of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the ties are growing — but remain mixed on virtually every front.

The two nations are partnering more than ever on battling global warming, but they still differ deeply over hard targets for reductions in the greenhouse-gas emissions that cause it. China has supported sterner sanctions to halt North Korea's nuclear weapons program, but it still balks at getting more aggressive about reining in Iran's uranium enrichment.

China is a huge and lucrative market for American goods and services, and yet it has a giant trade deficit with the U.S. that, like a raft of other economic issues, is a bone

of contention between the two governments. The two militaries have increased their contacts, but clashes still happen and the U.S. remains worried about a dramatic buildup in what is already the largest standing army in the world.

Amid all that, Obama has adopted a pragmatic approach that stresses the positive, sometimes earning him criticism for being too soft on Beijing, particularly in the area of human rights abuses and what the U.S. regards

as an undervalued Chinese currency that disadvantages U.S. products.

Obama recognizes that a rising China, as the world's third-largest economy on the way to becoming the second and the largest foreign holder of U.S. debt, has shifted the dynamic more toward one of equals.

For instance, Chinese questions about how Washington spending policies will affect the already soaring U.S. deficit and the safety of Chinese investments now must be answered by Washington. Second, Obama wants not to anger Beijing, but to encourage it to pair its growing economic and political clout with greater leadership in solving some of the most urgent global problems, including a sagging economy, warming planet and the spread of dangerous weapons.

Obama has talked warmly toward China, particularly in the days leading up to his visit.

"The United States does

not seek to contain China," Obama said in a speech from Tokyo on Saturday. "On the contrary, the rise of a strong, prosperous China can be a source of strength for the community of nations."

One test of the line Obama is walking on China will be human rights, including religious freedom in the officially atheist nation. Aides said in advance that Obama would raise several human rights issues privately with Chinese leaders, including President Hu Jintao.

But it was unlikely he would repeat those messages too stridently in public, out of concern for angering his hosts. Even before arriving in China, for example, he declined to get specific about human rights concerns with China in his Tokyo speech and eschewed the traditional presidential meeting with the Dalai Lama while he was in Washington in June.

Obama said he would see the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader later, a decision welcomed by Chinese officials who pressure foreign governments not to meet with the Dalai Lama and spurn Tibetans' desires for autonomy from Chinese rule. The White House hoped Monday's town hall meeting with Chinese university students would allow Obama to telegraph U.S. values — through its successes and failures — to the widest Chinese audience possible. But those hopes will have their limits in communist-ruled, tightly controlled China. □

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Kosovo holds peaceful first vote since independence

NEBI QENA

Associated Press Writer

PRISTINA, Kosovo (AP) — Kosovo's first elections since independence from Serbia ended peacefully Sunday, with some minority Serbs ignoring a call to boycott and casting ballots alongside ethnic Albanians.

The elections for city council and mayors in 36 municipalities were seen as a key test of the fledgling state's viability following its contested February 2008 declaration of independence. Though results were not expected for hours after polls closed, party sympathizers were celebrating across Kosovo by honking their car horns, waving party flags and setting off fire crackers.

No major instances of unrest or fraud allegations were reported, though the run-up had been marred by tensions between rival ethnic Albanian parties, as well as the possibility of a boycott from the Serb minority. Stones were thrown Wednesday at Prime Minister Hashim Thaci's convoy, and there was an apparent assassination attempt Thursday on an opposition mayoral candidate.

Thaci had urged the country's 100,000 Serbs to ignore calls by Belgrade and the Serb

Orthodox Church to boycott the vote, calling it a key test for his new nation. So far, 63 countries have recognized Kosovo, including the United States and most European countries. Serbia has vowed to block further recognition and has Russia's support.

"It's great step for Kosovo," Thaci told The Associated Press after voting in downtown Pristina in the company of his wife and 10-year-old son.

"I'm sure we will have success and appreciate very much participation of all citizen, in particular Serbs of Kosovo," he said.

More than 5,000 officers were on patrol during the vote, which was also the first organized by Kosovo officials. Previous elections were run by the United Nations, which took control of Kosovo in 1999 after NATO waged an air war to stop Serb forces' crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists.

"This is the best of democracy, and I will do my duty as a citizen," said Zoje Bujupi, an ethnic Albanian.

The results of the council and mayoral races, run largely on local issues, were unlikely to upset the country's fragile political scene, as the ethnic Albanian leadership is eager to show it can handle its own

affairs.

Election officials said 45 percent of the 1.5 million registered voters cast ballots, a slight increase from the 2007 election turnout when 40 percent voted. Kosovo's first U.N.-run poll in 2000 saw an 80 percent turnout.

"We are very happy with the flow of these elections," election official Nesrin Kumnova told reporters.

"We have no information of any big incidents that would damage the election."

It was unclear how many of Sunday's voters were Serbs, but some Serbs could be seen voting in areas surrounded by majority Albanians.

One Serb leader running for a mayoral seat ignored the call to boycott and cast his ballot in the Serb enclave of Caglavica, just outside the capital Pristina.

"This vote here shows that ... the fear ... is loosening its grip," Momcilo Trajkovic said.

He said the fact that Serbs were voting was a sign of better times for the minority population, which decreased by a third after the war ended in 1999 and many left to live in Serbia.

Serbia's Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic said Belgrade did not recognize elections organized



by "the so-called Republic of Kosovo," but would not "retaliate" against the Serbs who take part.

"Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia, and it will always be so," Jeremic said.

In the ethnically divided town of Mitrovica, where less than 1 percent of votes were cast, a Serbian government official based in Kosovo suggested the Serb participation this year could signal a rift within the Serb minority. Some of

Kosovo's Serbs still recognize the Belgrade government as their own.

"Today's election is a serious challenge for the Serbian authorities here," Oliver Ivanovic told The Associated Press. "In time it will be a test of confidence in Serbia's rule. The possible serious participation of Serbs in these elections could duplicate power on the ground, and that would be very dangerous." □

Aruba TODAY

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Frustrated Palestinians to appeal to U.N. for state



Palestinian demonstrators try to break a separation door during a protest against the Israeli separation barrier in the northern West Bank village of Deir Ghassoun, Saturday, Nov 14, 2009. Israel says the barrier is necessary for security while Palestinians call it a land grab.

MARK LAVIE

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) — A Palestinian drive to ask the U.N. Security Council to endorse a state unilaterally, put forward by a top negotiator Sunday, appeared more an expression of frustration with U.S. and Israeli policies and stalled peace talks than a real effort to go it alone.

A resolution for a Palestinian state could face a veto from the U.S., Israel's main ally.

Associated Press

But if the Security Council approved it, consequences could be even more severe.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected the move, warning Israel would retaliate.

"There is no substitute for negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians," Netanyahu said in a speech at the Saban Forum in Jerusalem Sunday evening, saying he wanted a full peace agreement with them.

Then he warned, "Any unilateral action would only unravel the framework of agreements between us and can only lead to one-sided steps on the part of Israel."

He did not elaborate further, but an Israeli legal expert said if the Palestinians move ahead by themselves, Israel would be within its rights to cancel interim peace accords, which regulate daily life between the two sides.

The Palestinians are upset over continued expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem and are disappointed with the U.S. failure to put pressure on Israel to halt the construction. The lack of progress led Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to threaten to quit politics earlier this month.

As events unfolded, that, too, appeared to be an indirect appeal for international backing by Abbas, who enjoys considerable world support. Abbas said he did not want to run in an election set in January. But last week, election officials postponed the vote indefinitely, saying that the militant Islamic

Hamas' control of the Gaza Strip made it impossible to proceed. In the West Bank Sunday, officials in Abbas' Fatah Party said they would meet next month to extend his term indefinitely.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said frustrated Palestinians had decided to turn to the U.N. Security Council after 18 years of on-again, off-again negotiations with Israel. "Now is our defining moment. We went into this peace process in order to achieve a two-state solution," he said. "The endgame is to tell the Israelis that now the international community has recognized the two-state solution on the '67 borders," referring to the cease-fire lines in effect before the 1967 war, when Israel captured territories from Jordan and Egypt that the Palestinians claim for their state.

Further complicating the situation is the status of the Gaza Strip. Erekat said the U.N. initiative would be to create a state in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, but Hamas has controlled Gaza since it expelled forces

loyal to the Western-backed Abbas in 2007.

Erekat declined to say when the Palestinians would make their appeal to the U.N., signaling that the threat may be aimed in large part at putting pressure on Israel. Nimir Hamad, an adviser to Abbas, said the Palestinians "have no intention of rushing" to the Security Council.

The Palestinians declared independence on Nov. 15, 1988, in the midst of a violent uprising against Israel that lasted until the first interim accord was signed in 1993. Many countries recognized the declaration, but it was never implemented.

Instead, the interim accords set up a system of interlocking administrations that falls far short of peaceful relations but quietly brings some order to issues like Palestinian imports and exports, tax collection, utilities and security cooperation. More importantly, Abbas' Palestinian Authority itself is a product of the interim accords. If it were superseded by a U.N.-endorsed state, Israel could cut off relations with the Palestinian government.

In fact, Robbie Sabel, a former legal adviser to Israel's Foreign Ministry and now a lecturer in international law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, told The Associated Press that Israel would be within its legal rights to cancel all the partial peace accords.

"Israel could say there has been such a gross and major violation that the agreement itself is no longer in force," he said, since the agreement stipulates that all outstanding issues must be settled in negotiations.

Israel controls much of the West Bank, which is dotted by more than 100 settlements and army bases, with hundreds of roadblocks in place. A newly independent Palestinian state would be hard pressed to take control of its territory.

Some 300,000 settlers live in the West Bank, in addition to 180,000 Israelis living in Jewish neighborhoods built in east Jerusalem. Efforts to confront the Israelis could quickly escalate into widespread violence. □

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Photo by Diane Keijzer

Nigeria militants start peace talks with president

BASHIR ADIGUN

Associated Press Writer

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — Nigeria's main militant group in the oil-rich Delta region said Sunday that it had started formal peace talks with the country's president for the first time since it declared an indefinite cease-fire last month.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta called Saturday's dialogue with President Umaru Yar'Adua useful.

"This meeting heralds the beginning of serious, meaningful dialogue between MEND and the Nigerian government to deal with and resolve root issues that have long been swept under the carpet," militant group spokesman Jomo Gbomo said in a statement Sunday.

The president's spokesman, Olusegun Adeniyi, said Saturday that Yar'Adua met with a group of negotiators

"in continuation of his efforts to find lasting solution to the problem in the Niger Delta and following on his earlier promise to meet with any individual or groups in that direction."

The group had declared an indefinite cease-fire on Oct. 25 after a meeting between the Nigerian President and its longtime leader, Henry Okah. Gbomo had said that after the meeting, Okah had "indicated the willingness of the government to negotiate" with the militant group, which then formed a team to negotiate, Gbomo said.

Gbomo said Sunday the negotiating team that met with the president included four men. Okah and another field commander, Farah Dagogo, sat in the meeting as observers, he said.

Attacks by the militant group and unrest in the Delta region had cut Nigeria's oil production by about a million



Fighters with the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) prepare for an operation against the Nigerian army in Niger Delta in 2008. Nigeria's president held "frank and fruitful" talks with former oil rebel leaders in an effort to end the conflict in the Niger Delta region.

AFP/File/Pius Utomi Ekpei

barrels a day, allowing Angola to overtake it as Africa's top oil producer. Ebikabowei Victor Ben, are among more than 8,000 militants who surrendered their arms in the government's amnesty program, which ended Oct. 4.

The militants say they are fighting to force the federal government to send more oil revenue to the southern region that remains poor despite five decades of oil production. □

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



At long last, Michelle Wie gets first LPGA Tour win

STEPHEN WADE

AP Sports Writer

GUADALAJARA, Mexico (AP) — Michelle Wie won the first LPGA title of her career on Sunday, fulfilling the promise of a decade with a 3-under par 69 to win the Lorena Ochoa Invitational by two strokes over Paula Creamer.

Wie finished off the victory in style, hitting a greenside bunker shot to 6 inches on the 18th hole and then tapping in for a birdie.

After pulling the ball out of the hole, the 20-year-old Wie turned to the gallery, looked to the sky and let out a large sigh of relief. The long wait is over.

"It's definitely off by my back," Wie said. "I think that hopefully life will be a lot better, but I still have a lot of work to do."

Morgan Pressel (67), Jiayi Shin (71) and Cristie Kerr (72) were three shots behind in a share of third place.

Continued on Page B12



Michelle Wie, from the United States, kisses her trophy after winning the Lorena Ochoa Invitational LPGA golf tournament in Guadalajara, Mexico, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009.

Associated Press



Southern California head coach Pete Carroll, left, and Stanford head coach Jim Harbaugh greet each other after a NCAA college football game in Los Angeles on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009. Stanford won 55-21.

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — After

another humiliating loss, Southern California tumbled to its worst ranking since Pete

USC tumbles, Stanford soars in AP football poll

Carroll's Trojans began their run as one of college football's best programs in 2002.

USC is No. 22 in The Associated Press Top 25 released Sunday, dropping 11 spots after losing 55-21 to Stanford. The Trojans have been ranked in 128 consecutive media polls dating to the start of the 2002 season, but never this low. The Trojans haven't been ranked lower than No. 13 since October 2002.

Meanwhile, Stanford soared up the rankings to No. 14, its best showing since being

Tiger wins for first time in Australia



Wearing his new Australian Masters Gold jacket, Tiger Woods of the U.S., waves to the crowd in Melbourne, Australia, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009 during a post match press conference. Woods won the match with 14-under, two shots ahead of Australia's Greg Chalmers.

Associated Press

DOUG FERGUSON,

AP Golf Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Tiger Woods gave the record crowds at the Australian Masters everything they could have wanted with his victory here Sunday, except a definitive answer

when he would return.

"I promise it won't be as long," Woods said to yet another warm ovation.

Woods took the lead for good with a 7-iron to within four feet for birdie on the fifth hole, and he hardly missed a shot the rest of the way for a 4-under 68 and a two-shot win over Australia's Greg Chalmers.

He won for the seventh time this year, and the 82nd time worldwide in his career. Woods now has a trophy from every continent where golf is played. Australia, the 13th country where he has won an individual event, had been the missing link. "I've never won down here, so now I have won on every continent, except for Antarctica," Woods said. "I haven't played the Antarctica Four-Ball yet. But to have won on every playable continent, it's something I've always wanted to do. And now I've done that." It had been 11 years since Woods last competed in Australia, at the 1998 Presidents Cup. □

major college teams were next, with TCU at No. 4, Cincinnati at No. 5 and Boise State No. 6 for the second consecutive week. No. 7 Georgia Tech and No. 8 Pittsburgh also held their places. No. 9 Ohio State and No. 10 LSU flip-flopped for the only other change in the top 10.

For USC, the lopsided loss to Stanford marked the second time in the last three games the Trojans were handed the worst loss of the Carroll era. Oregon beat USC 47-20 in Eugene on Halloween night □

Associated Press

Johnson wins at Phoenix to cruise into finale

JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

AVONDALE, Arizona (AP) — Jimmie Johnson rebounded from a rare bad race with a dominating victory at Phoenix International Raceway on Sunday that pushed him to the edge of a NASCAR record fourth consecutive championship.

Johnson led 238 laps to win for the fourth time in the last five races at Phoenix. Jeff Burton finished second and was followed by Denny Hamlin, Mark Martin and pole-sitter Martin Truex Jr. Kurt Busch, winner last week at Texas,

finished sixth.

It was Johnson's seventh victory of the season, and fourth since the start of the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship.

More important, it stretched his lead to 108 points over Hendrick Motorsports teammate Mark Martin heading into the finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway. Johnson needs to finish 25th or better next week to grab a spot in NASCAR's record books. Although his Hendrick team initially celebrated as if the title had been locked up, the No. 48 crew quickly

settled down in Victory Lane. "I can't put my guard down," Johnson said, "anything and everything can go wrong."

It did a week ago in Texas, where Johnson was caught in a wreck three laps into the race and had to sit inside his disabled race car as his crew did a total rebuild of the Chevrolet. He limped to a 38th-place finish that cost him 111 points in the standings.

It still left him with a 73-point lead over Martin headed into Phoenix, but Johnson refused to play it safe and coast to the win. He raced hard all weekend, intent on bouncing



Jimmie Johnson celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series' Checker O'Reilly Auto Parts 500 race at Phoenix International Raceway in Avondale, Ariz., Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009.

Associated Press

back with a dominating showing in the desert.

"We could have easily been beat down, and certainly there were some dark moments over the past week thinking about the points lost," Johnson said.

"We didn't, though. But we saw in Texas that anything can happen, so we don't need to get too excited about this."

Martin finished fourth, respectable but not what he needed to move closer to the championship that has eluded him his entire NASCAR career. The sentimental favorite this year will likely finish second in the standings for a fifth time.

"We gave it everything we had," Martin said.

He's the only driver still in mathematical contention

to catch Johnson. Fellow Hendrick driver Jeff Gordon will be eliminated as soon as Johnson starts next Sunday's race, and Johnson's win at Phoenix knocked everyone else out of contention.

Martin, however, is refusing to concede to Johnson and said he won't let up next week in Homestead as he tries to at least stave off Gordon for second in the final standings.

"We've still got to go to Homestead and run like this again, because we still have heat behind us, Jeff Gordon, especially," Martin said. "I definitely have been beat by the best — Jeff Gordon, Tony Stewart and Dale Earnhardt. It wouldn't embarrass me if it was Jimmie Johnson as well."

Novak Djokovic wins Paris Masters

SAMUEL PETREQUIN

AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — Third-seeded Novak Djokovic scrambled to a 6-2, 5-7, 7-6 (3) victory over local favorite Gael Monfils to win the Paris Masters for the first time in his career on Sunday.

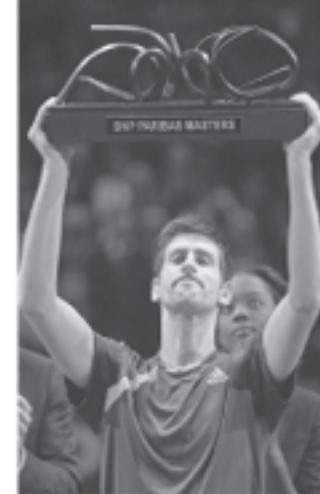
The 22-year old Serb survived a 2 hours and 43 minutes battle to win back-to-back ATP titles after defeating top-ranked Roger Federer in the Swiss Indoors final last Sunday.

Djokovic also beat World No. 2 Rafael Nadal in the semifinals in Paris and will be a strong favorite when he'll try to defend his title at the eight-man ATP World Tour Finals from Nov. 22-29 in London.

"Winning back to back titles at this level is a huge achievement for me, and adding to that, beating the World No. 1 and No. 2," Djokovic said. "I really feel that I'm in great form right now."

Djokovic looked set for a comfortable triumph after winning the first set in just half an hour, but then struggled physically to stay at the same level.

"It was unbelievably difficult," said the World No. 3, who has won a record 76 matches on the tour this season and claimed his first Masters 1000 tournament of the year following four defeats in



Serbia's Novak Djokovic holds the trophy after defeating France's Gael Monfils during the final of the BNP Masters indoor tennis tournament in Paris, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009. Third-seeded Novak Djokovic won the Paris Masters for the first time by defeating Frenchman Gael Monfils 6-2, 5-7, 7-6 (3) in Sunday's final.

Associated Press

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MOTORSPORTS

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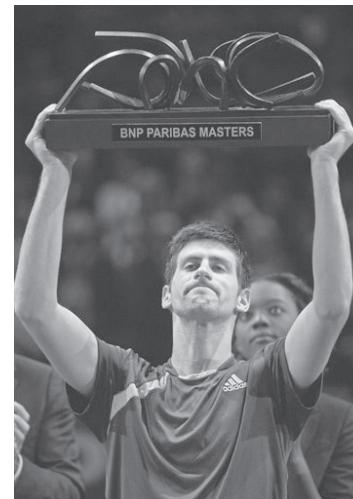
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Associated Press

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"It was unbelievably difficult," said the World No. 3, who has won a record 76 matches on the tour this season and claimed his first Masters 1000 tournament of the year following four defeats in

finals.

"Gael was very unpredictable and he was hitting the ball very good."

Djokovic extended his record against Monfils to 4-0.

The former Australian Open winner fell on his knees and screamed on the centre court when Monfils — who was chasing his third career title — doublefaulted on the Serb's first match point.

"I didn't find any solution in the beginning, I was playing too defensive," Monfils said. "But I didn't lose faith in my chances and I almost overturned the match." □

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Paula Creamer, from the United States, puts the ball on the 16th hole during the final round of the Lorena Ochoa Invitational LPGA golf tournament in Guadalajara, Mexico, Sunday, Nov. 15, 2009.

Associated Press

WIE WINS**Continued from Page B10**

Wie finished a 13-under 275 after starting the day at the Guadalajara Country Club tied for the lead with Kerr at 10 under.

Wie first qualified for a USGA event at age 10 and played an LPGA event when she was 12. She joined the LPGA this season and has begun to show the sizzling game that has made her arguably the biggest attraction in women's golf.

Wie had a few shaky moments but she was steadier down the stretch as her rivals faltered. In the past, it's often been the Hawaiian player who has stumbled.

She had chances to pull away on the front nine, but couldn't quite do it. She went to 13 under with a birdie on 11, giving her a one-shot lead over Creamer and Kerr. Wie bogeyed the next hole when her escape shot from under a cluster of trees squarely hit a trunk, the ball rebounding into the fairway behind her.

But she made par through 17. "Right now it feels fantastic," Wie said. "It's great year. I went through some ups and downs ... And obviously this tournament is the icing on the cake." Creamer drew even with Wie with an eagle on 10. But two late bogeys ruined her chances of victory.

"I gave it a chance, and Michelle played great," said Creamer, who has struggled with stomach problems, back and thumb injuries. She is winless this year after eight career victories.

"I feel a lot better with my golf," she said. "It's just unfortunate that you're so close, yet you're so far

away."

The co-leader with Wie after three rounds, Kerr was level par on the front nine and reached 12 under with birdies on 10 and 11. After 12 holes, Wie, Creamer and Kerr were tied, but Kerr faded with bogeys on 15 and 16.

Shin, the tour's rookie of the year, also slipped. Tournament host Ochoa shot 69 to finish six off the pace and Ai Miyazato, No. 2 on this year's money list, finished 10 back after closing with a 72.

Ochoa and Shin will vie next week for the player of the year award at the LPGA Tour Championship in Houston, the last event of the season. Ochoa has won the last three, but Shin leads the points race. Shin is trying to become the first woman to win both titles since Nancy Lopez in 1978.

The LPGA, battered by economic problems and the forced resignation of its commissioner this summer, needs this as much as Wie.

"Literally, when Michelle Wie is atop the leaderboard it's like night and day and that's star power," LPGA spokesman David Higdon said the day before Wie's win. "That's all it is. This is somebody people

want to follow. You see it in her presence, the way she walks around. The way people talk to her."

Wie played PGA Tour events against the men when she was 14 — the biggest stage there is. She was criticized at the time for not focusing on women's events. She turned pro in 2005 before even finishing high school. She ignored the criticism and, at 16, she was poised to become the first woman to qualify for the men's U.S. Open before her putter failed her.

Shortly after that she began to lose confidence and the biggest attraction in women's golf went into a long, painful slump that was made worst by a wrist injury that ruined her 2007 season.

She has slowly worked her way back, earning her LPGA card for this season, gaining credibility with players and emerging as a star on this year's Solheim Cup, going undefeated in four matches.

When she is on her game, it flies with soaring drives and better and better touch on the greens. Wie has finished second twice this season, and has two other third-place finishes on the LPGA Tour. □

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Honduras: Renuncia de Zelaya a restitución no cesa acuerdo

TEGUCIGALPA (AP) - El acuerdo para solucionar la crisis política hondureña seguirá vigente aún cuando el derrocado mandatario Manuel Zelaya haya renunciado a ser restituido en el cargo, dijo el domingo una negociadora del gobierno de facto.

"Todo sigue caminando y seguiremos trabajando en esa ruta", dijo a la AP la ex presidenta de la Corte Suprema de Justicia Vilma Morales, refiriéndose al acuerdo Tegucigalpa-San José. Morales representa en las negociaciones al presidente de facto Roberto Micheletti.

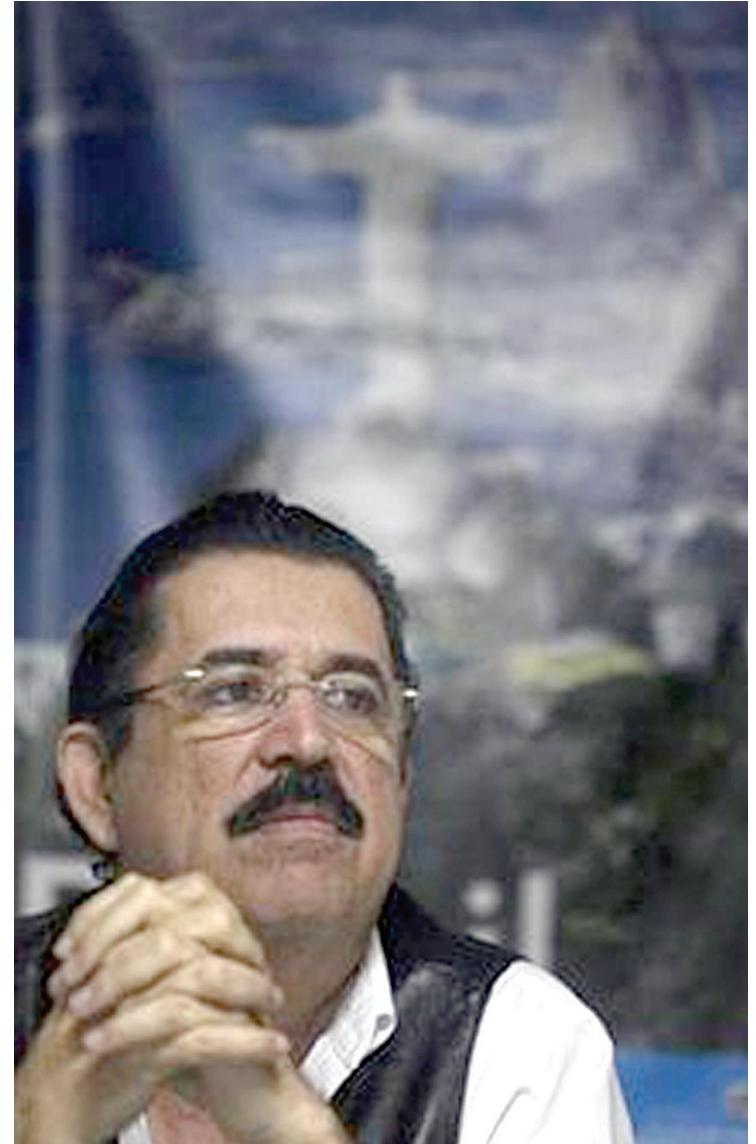
Al ser preguntada sobre si el anuncio formulado la noche del sábado por Zelaya, en el sentido de que renunciaba a ser restituido, tendría efectos sobre el acuerdo Tegucigalpa-San José _que se encuentra en el limbo_ Morales respondió que "con firmeza el acuerdo está vivo".

Destacó que el pacto "fue suscrito entre las dos partes, es cierto que ha habido un acompañamiento del Departamento de Estado (de los Estados Unidos) y hemos empeñado nuestra palabra en ratificar el

acuerdo".

El acuerdo Tegucigalpa-San José fue firmado el 30 de octubre. No obstante, cinco días después fue considerado como un "fracaso" por el mandatario derrocado al rechazar que la conformación de un gobierno de reconciliación, uno de los puntos que estableció el consenso, fuese encabezada por Micheletti. Además del gobierno de reconciliación integrado por representantes de diversos partidos políticos y de la sociedad civil, el acuerdo también incluye el reconocimiento de ambas partes a las elecciones presidenciales y que el Congreso, tras consultar con otras instancias, se exprese en torno a la restitución de Zelaya, derrocado por un golpe militar el 28 de junio. □

El derrocado presidente de Honduras Manuel Zelaya durante una conferencia de prensa, 4 nov 2009. El presidente depuesto de Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, dijo el sábado que rechazará cualquier acuerdo de vuelta al poder en el país y que impugnará los resultados de unas elecciones presidenciales pautadas para finales del mes. REUTERS/Edgard Garrido



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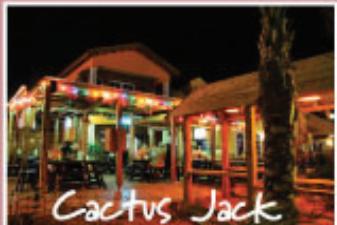


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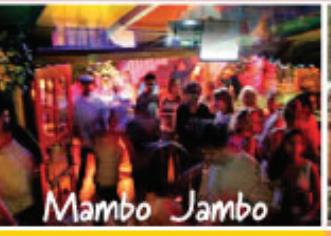
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